



Michael F. Easley
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William G. Ross Jr.
Secretary, DENR

BIRD EXHIBIT BEGINS JOURNEY

By Tamara Ward
Publications Coordinator

When most people think of migratory birds, they envision long V's of geese flying south, they feel the nip of winter on their noses or hear the quacking of ducks. But what they don't realize is that many of the avian visitors to their backyard birdfeeders in summer — visitors like hummingbirds and flycatchers, kingbirds and summer tanagers — also are migratory birds.

These birds, much smaller than their webbed-footed cousins, are visiting from below our nation's border, and their nesting and wintering habitats are in danger.

In an effort to raise awareness about these birds, Friends of State Parks initiated a joint project with the NC Division of Parks and Recreation to create a traveling exhibit on neotropical migratory birds that nest in the piedmont. The exhibit was unveiled Jan. 26 at William B. Umstead State Park and will travel to other state parks in the piedmont. Two more exhibits — one for coastal and one for the mountain state parks — are scheduled to be completed by year-end.



ALEC WHITAKER, ONE OF THE EXHIBIT DESIGNERS, PUTS FINISHING TOUCHES ON THE PROJECT.

Each exhibit will be tailored to represent the unique blend of neotropical migratory birds in that area. All three exhibits were funded with a \$20,000 grant from International Paper Co. and additional

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RANGER'S VALENTINE'S GIFT IS CPR



This Valentine's Day, while other people were passing out candied hearts, boxes of chocolate and flowers, Derek Parsons, Park Ranger III at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area, did more than what was expected. He helped save a life.

After a routine CPR refresher course at the recreation area, Parsons was purchasing repair supplies for Jordan Lake at a nearby Home Depot store. When he walked to the checkout area, he noticed a group of people

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources

UP CLOSE & "PERSONNEL"

David Downer recently joined the NC Division of Parks and Recreation as the piedmont region trails specialist. Working from the Yorkshire Center, Downer replaces Ann Coughlin, who is now the coastal region trails specialist.

Downer comes from Utah, the land of industry and giant ponderosa pines — more specifically, he comes from Dixie National Forest, a land of canyons where wary travelers cross Hell's Backbone Bridge and peer into Death Hollow. Downer was public information officer at the na-

tional forest, where his duties included managing and maintaining the forest, campgrounds and trails. He has experience in design and interpretive work, as well.

Downer is no stranger to North Carolina having earned an undergraduate degree from UNC Greensboro and a master's degree from East Carolina University. His master's degree is in cultural geography, which examines humans' relationship with the land.

"My specific focus was sense of place — how people per-

ceive their surroundings," Downer said.

As trails specialist for the piedmont, Downer's work will cover 34 counties. He said that he will work to develop connections between places and trails.

"I'm looking forward to getting out and working with all different kinds of people," Downer said. "That's one of the things that really excited me about my job."

Downer moved to North Carolina in January with his wife, a marriage and family therapist, and 14-month-old son.

From The Director's Desk

Dear Fellow Employees:

As of this writing, it is still unclear exactly how the most recent round of budget adjustments will affect our division, that is, beyond a return to the hiring freeze and the hours spent filling out "Request for Exemption" forms. We do know that the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and the Natural Heritage Trust Fund were tapped for \$5 million and \$3 million respectively. And, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund lost half of the \$40 million allocated by the General Assembly just a few months ago.

In times like these, it's good to know who your friends are. And, the Friends of State Parks showed their dedication once again this winter, unveiling a traveling educational exhibit at William B. Umstead State Park. The group made good use of a grant from International Paper Co. to create the first of three such exhibits on neotropical birds that will circulate through parks in the piedmont, mountains and coastal regions.

Support groups such as the statewide Friends of State Parks and those that focus their efforts on individual parks become more valued in tough times, but not merely as conduits for donations. They help keep us grounded in our basic mission, provide a necessary morale boost at times and they offer one more way for us to keep in touch with our local communities.

It's a good time to pause and reflect that we have some special folks who support us and care about what we do.

Sincerely,

Phil

Philip K. McKnelly

Dana Beth Reed is the new park ranger at New River State Park. She has a bachelor's degree in recreation management and seasonal experience with the division at Mount Jefferson and New River.

Joseph M. Deppe, formerly a park ranger at Hanging Rock State Park, has transferred to the vacant ranger position at Eno River State Park.

Marcus Daniel Crossman is the new park ranger at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area. He has a bachelor's degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences and comes to the division from the poultry sciences unit at North Carolina State University.

Fredrick M. Majors, Park Ranger II at Falls Lake State Recreation Area, has been promoted to Park Ranger III.

George S. Lassiter has been hired as the general utility worker at Singletary Lake State Park.

Ronnel M. Shank has joined the staff at Medoc Mountain State Park as a Park Ranger II. He has a bachelor's degree in natural resource recreation management.

BIRD EXHIBIT

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funds from Friends of State Parks. Part of the grant money will be used to build custom-fitted boxes, so the exhibit can be shipped by van from park to park.

"Most people don't realize why they see neotropical migratory birds only once in a while, and don't realize how far they travel once a year," said Karl Zorowski, who worked on the exhibit's design and graphics. "The whole purpose of this exhibit is to educate people about neotropical migratory birds, make them aware that they do travel through North Carolina and that they are threatened, and let people know that there are things

we can do to ensure that these birds continue to come through."

About 50 neotropical songbirds nest in North Carolina, and others pass through the state on their way to nesting



areas farther north, feasting on insects along the way. Some neotropical shorebirds travel from as far away as South America, and others nest in the arctic. While swallows migrate in flocks in the daytime, most of the neotropical songbirds migrate at night, using the stars and the earth's magnetic field to navigate. One of the principal threats for neotropical migratory birds is habitat loss. While forestlands continue to be clearcut, both in the state and in the

birds' homelands, neotropical migratory bird populations continue to be threatened.

The exhibit consists of two cabinets and four display panels. The cabinets hold dioramas and mounted neotropical migratory birds that nest in the piedmont. The four birds on display are the indigo bunting, summer tanager, yellow-billed cuckoo and ruby-throated hummingbird. Visitors can punch buttons to hear the birds' calls.

The panels introduce the birds, explaining how they migrate and identifying threats they face. The panels also discuss the benefits people reap from having neotropical migratory birds in the state and how people can help the birds.

Tom Howard, the division's south district interpretation and education specialist who also worked on the exhibit, said that the idea for the exhibit originated from a similar display by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

"State parks are important areas for many of our neotropical migrants for breeding purposes," said Howard. "But, if (the birds) are not protected in their migration and in their wintering areas, then we will lose them as a component of our native breeding fauna."

The exhibit's text was written by Alec Whitaker, project director and also a board member with Friends of State Parks, and edited by Howard and Marti Kane, lead interpretation and education specialist. Steve Stephens of Stephens Woodcraft created the cabinetry. Warren Kimsey was the taxidermist, A. Brothers Associates and Wilderness Graphics provided some of the exhibit's graphics, and photographs for the project were donated by James Parnell.

RANGER CPR

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circled around a woman lying on the floor. Parsons rushed to the scene and checked the woman's vital signs, asking bystanders if they knew what had happened. The woman had no pulse, was not breathing and was turning blue. The customers said that she had simply passed out.

Parsons made certain that 911 had been called and ran to his vehicle, returning with his resuscitation mask and first-aid bag. After rechecking the victim's vital signs, he and a Home Depot employee administered CPR. After about three and a half cycles, a rescue squad from Apex arrived and took charge. The woman was taken to the local hospital

and was placed in intensive care.

"It was ironic that we had the CPR class that day," Parsons said. "I wasn't out of class for 30 minutes (when the incident occurred)."

"Having just come from the course definitely helped," he said. "It was fresher on my mind than anything else."

Tom Jackson, the division's chief ranger, said that he is proud of how the division's field staff consistently assists others in need.

"This is another example of our staff meeting unexpected challenges and having the training and initiative to respond," Jackson said.



WARM, CLEAR WEATHER MAY HAVE HELPED THE TURNOUT FOR A WEEKDAY, WINTER HIKE AT JORDAN LAKE.

WEEKDAY HIKES APPEAL TO SOME

By CHARLIE PEEK
Public Information Officer

Some of the 15 people trailing Ranger Brian Cox on a hunt for beaver activity around an old farm pond likely saw it as a great antidote for wintertime cabin fever. And, it didn't hurt that the afternoon was warm and crystal clear.

At any rate, it was a respectable turnout for an interpretive program at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area, all the more so since it was scheduled on a Friday afternoon. The park is experimenting with a series of weekday afternoon programs, partly in hopes of spreading the workload and drawing visitors on off-peak days, said Sue McBean, lead I&E ranger.

"It's a good time for us. We've got more people available than on weekends, so we're just trying it," McBean said.

Early on, the response has been unpredictable, like the weather, she said. A scheduled canoe program on a Thursday

'IT'S A GOOD TIME FOR US. WE'VE GOT MORE PEOPLE AVAILABLE THAN ON WEEKENDS, SO WE'RE JUST TRYING IT.'

SUE McBEAN
LEAD I&E RANGER

afternoon had no takers. But, a new program on agricultural history in the Lake Jordan area, which involved an off-the-track hike to view abandoned farm machinery, drew several phone calls right away, she said.

The recreation areas sometimes have to be creative in scheduling interpretive programs because of heavy visitation on weekends and throughout the warm-weather season at sites that are spread far apart. McBean said, "It's just the busy-ness of it. On a typical Saturday and Sunday, we have to spread ourselves pretty thin."

Cox's beaver hike drew a

good cross-section of folks, two young mothers with several children and one dog in tow, an elderly couple and several young adults coming alone. Many of them said they had learned of the program through local newspapers.

McBean said the park sends program schedules to about 25 local newspapers, most of them small weeklies. Such broad promotion is time consuming as well. "I'm finding more and more of them learning of (the programs) through the Internet now and that's good," she said.

Like many other parks recently, Jordan Lake is also trying to broaden its repertoire of programs, she said, and that type of experimentation is also easier in the off-season and at off-peak times.

"If you want to do something different, the time you have to put into that is pretty intense," she said. "Just getting the basic information together takes a lot of planning time."

FALLS LAKE COUNT DRAWS 21 VOLUNTEERS

By Ranger STACY HINES
Falls Lake State Recreation Area

It was a chilly start, barely above freezing on Dec. 29 when Falls Lake State Recreation Area Ranger Brian Bockhahn began shortly after 5 a.m. calling owls. Why was he up this early? He was the organizer for the fourth annual Falls Lake Christmas Bird Count.

Even though this was only the fourth time Falls Lake had participated in the count, it is a national tradition occurring annually for more than a century. It began on Christmas Day in 1900 with a suggestion from ornithologist Frank Chapman, also an officer in the Audubon Society, to count the birds instead of following a previous tradition of shooting as many as possible on that day. That first year, 27 people participated and more than 90 species of birds were sighted.

The event is held either 10 days prior to or 10 days after Christmas Day. The information collected is one of the oldest continuous records of bird populations and distributions in the western hemisphere. A first-time participant in the Falls Lake count, Margaret Cummins of Nashville, NC, hit the nail on the head with her statement that the object is to obtain an, "idea of the health of the environment and bird populations". Two other first-time participants, Alden Hanson and Becky Brown, said that, "it was to see changes over time" in bird populations. These two statements indicate why the count is so important.

Bockhahn was pleased



PARTICIPANTS IN THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT AT FALLS LAKE INCLUDED, FROM LEFT, DEBORAH ROBERTSON, ALDEN HANSON, BECKY BROWN, BRIAN BOCKHAHN, MARGARET CUMMINS, GEORGE CUMMINS

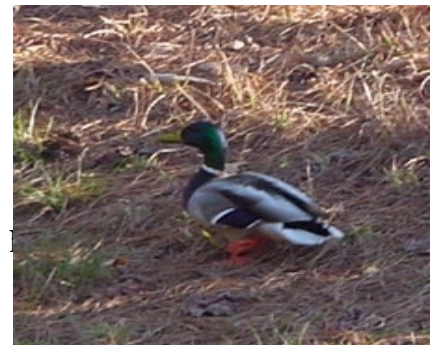
with the turnout of 21 volunteers this year, and excited to see that many were veterans of previous counts. The volunteers began early, counted birds from 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. and covered more than 216 miles around Falls Lake either by car or foot.

First-time participants agreed it was an excellent learning experience and a way to discover the natural world. Margaret and George Cummins, mother and son, participated because George was required to interpret the data from the bird count for a scout badge. He decided he would not have earned the badge if he did not actually participate in the count. All the hard work paid off as 95 species of birds were sighted, the highest number in the four-year history of the count.

Some species sighted for the first time were the gray catbird, American woodcock, purple finch and Lincoln's

sparrow, one somewhat rarely seen in this area. One you will be guaranteed to see every year is the ring-billed gull. It's been the most commonly sighted bird in all four counts at Falls Lake with numbers sighted ranging up to 16,000. To learn more details about the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count and to view data collected go to <http://www.audubon.org>.

Watch for information on how to get involved in next year's Falls Lake Christmas Bird Count, to be held between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5.



FOUR HONORED AT KERR LAKE

Four staffers at Kerr Lake State Recreation Area were honored recently by the division.

Gene Daniel, Park Ranger III was presented a 30-year service award, and Scott Ayers, Park Ranger III, and Philip Hicks, Maintenance Mechanic II, were presented 15-year service awards by North District Superintendent Susan Tillotson and Park Superintendent David Coburn.

Also, Ranger Bill Meyer was given a Special Achievement Award for his efforts in interpretive and education programs. Meyer has done extensive work with the park's exhibit hall, coordinating exhibit loans from the NC Tobacco Museum and private individuals. He also coordinated with park staff and local volunteers to build the exhibits.

One exhibit theme is the history of the Kerr Lake area from early American Indian times through the 1800s. Another covers tobacco farming in the region.

Meyer also coordinated an Environmental Eco-Meet competition among schools from four counties that border Kerr Lake. Eight schools and eight agencies from Virginia and North Carolina participated.



MEYER, CENTER, WAS HONORED BY SUPT. COBURN, LEFT, AND TILLOTSON FOR SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS.



DANIEL



AYERS



HICKS

PAMLICO JOE

Pamlico Joe (a.k.a. Jim Swinson) of Chocowinity, along with his brother and wife, performed at November's Interpretation and Education Skills II training at William B. Umstead State Park. Pamlico Joe's skills involve the guitar, harmonica, kazoo and crab trap. He has been an NC Touring Artist since 1988, has recorded several albums and received two Emerging Artist grants.



NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT

JANUARY 2002

PARK	JANUARY 2002	TOTAL YTD JAN. 2002	JANUARY 2001	TOTAL YTD JAN. 2001	% CHANGE (2001/2002)	
					JAN.	YTD
BOONES CAVE	1,765	1,765	1,961	1,961	-10%	-10%
CAROLINA BEACH	9,132	9,132	9,916	9,916	-8%	-8%
CLIFFS OF THE NEUSE	4,731	4,731	3,628	3,628	30%	30%
CROWDER'S MOUNTAIN	17,910	17,910	15,579	15,579	15%	15%
ENO RIVER	19,390	19,390	19,232	19,232	1%	1%
OCCONEECHEE MOUNTAIN	1,904	1,904	2,660	2,660	-28%	-28%
FALLS LAKE	21,768	21,768	24,904	24,904	-13%	-13%
FORT FISHER	18,361	18,361	24,538	24,538	-25%	-25%
FORT MACON	48,770	48,770	42,980	42,980	13%	13%
GOOSE CREEK	8,459	8,459	7,137	7,137	19%	19%
GORGES	5,585	5,585	3,646	3,646	53%	53%
HAMMOCKS BEACH	9,018	9,018	7,041	7,041	28%	28%
HANGING ROCK	14,348	14,348	13,980	13,980	3%	3%
JOCKEY'S RIDGE	19,773	19,773	18,200	18,200	9%	9%
JONES LAKE	3,996	3,996	4,648	4,648	-14%	-14%
JORDAN LAKE	29,356	29,356	26,532	26,532	11%	11%
KERR LAKE	56,208	56,208	39,716	39,716	42%	42%
LAKE JAMES	6,556	6,556	5,900	5,900	11%	11%
LAKE NORMAN	14,800	14,800	7,995	7,995	85%	85%
LAKE WACCAMAW	5,248	5,248	5,156	5,156	2%	2%
LUMBER RIVER	2,985	2,985	3,800	3,800	-21%	-21%
MEDOC MOUNTAIN	2,408	2,408	2,552	2,552	-6%	-6%
MERCHANT'S MILLPOND	4,917	4,917	4,335	4,335	13%	13%
MORROW MOUNTAIN	17,100	17,100	17,060	17,060	0%	0%
MOUNT JEFFERSON	4,287	4,287	4,308	4,308	0%	0%
MOUNT MITCHELL	3,788	3,788	3,337	3,337	14%	14%
NEW RIVER	9,256	9,256	3,492	3,492	165%	165%
PETTIGREW	3,903	3,903	4,479	4,479	-13%	-13%
PILOT MOUNTAIN	17,559	17,559	17,964	17,964	-2%	-2%
RAVEN ROCK	5,637	5,637	6,889	6,889	-18%	-18%
SINGLETARY LAKE	628	628	616	616	2%	2%
SOUTH MOUNTAINS	8,146	8,146	10,492	10,492	-22%	-22%
STONE MOUNTAIN	28,740	28,740	37,224	37,224	-23%	-23%
WEYMOUTH WOODS	2,075	2,075	2,226	2,226	-7%	-7%
WILLIAM B. UMSTEAD	24,196	24,196	20,538	20,538	18%	18%
SYSTEMWIDE TOTAL	452,703	452,703	424,661	424,661	7%	7%

BATS HAVE NEW HOME AT LUMBER RIVER

At long last, the Rafinesque's big-eared bats at Lumber River State Park have a new place to call home.

The division erected two cement towers at the park in February in hopes that the bats will move into them as abandoned structures are demolished. The roosts are actually sections of manhole pipe stacked about 15 feet high and are designed to mimic hollow tupelo trees, the favored roosting spot for this species of special concern.

Interior surfaces of the roosts are roughed up to provide traction for the bats, and slabs of concrete cover the tops. Holes are cut at ground level to allow entry by researchers.

Seth Lambiase, division biologist, said he is optimistic the bats will take to the new homes. The species was discovered at the park two years ago as Lambiase and Mary Kay Clark of the NC Museum of Natural Sciences conducted surveys. They captured bats using mist nets strung between the abandoned buildings and the river.

A Rafinesque bat was spotted in one of the abandoned structures on the day of construction as park staffers escorted a Fayetteville Observer reporter.

The conservation project includes two identical structures erected last summer at South Mountains State Park. The effort at Lumber River, however, was stymied when the first manhole tubes for the roosts were broken upon delivery. Following that, it took extra time to find a



DIVISION STAFF AT LUMBER RIVER STATE PARK ERECTED TWO ARTIFICIAL BAT ROOSTS IDENTICAL TO THIS ONE PLACED AT SOUTH MOUNTAINS STATE PARK LAST SUMMER.

contractor with the right equipment to stack the manhole pipe.

Lambiase and Clark secured funds from Bat Conservation International, of Austin, TX for the project. And, Mid-Atlantic Drainage of Conover and Myrtle Beach, SC, provided the materials at a discount. The division provided manpower to prepare concrete foundation pads for the roosts and will continue to monitor them.

Mission

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation is:



to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;

to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina;

to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources

and

for all citizens and visitors of North Carolina.

The Steward

Division of Parks and Recreation — Public Information Office
1615 MSC — Raleigh, NC 27699-1615